

***NH Department of Health and Human Services
Plan to Close the Cliff Effect for Individuals and Families
who Receive Public Benefits Working Group
Meeting Minutes***

Friday, May 22, 2020

I. Call to order

Donnalee Lozeau called to order the meeting of the Cliff Effect Working Group meeting at 3:00PM on Friday, May 22, 2020 via Zoom on-line meeting.

II. In Attendance

- Chris Santaniello
- Christine Tappan
- Dee Pouliot
- Donnalee Lozeau
- Daniel Bishop
- Representative Mary Jane Wallner
- Senator Cindy Rosenwald
- Allison Joseph
- Gene Patnode
- Lisa English
- Rich Lavers
- Christine Brennan
- Susan Huard

Quorum was present

Guest Speakers: Jessica Lanney, DCYF – Government Performance Lab

III. Minute Review/Vote

- Discussed minutes from the February 10, 2020 meeting
- Susan Huard motioned to accept minutes as written.
- Representative Mary Jane Wallner seconded the motion
- Motion passed, minutes accepted

IV. Change in Leadership

- Lisa English has requested to step down as co-lead due to workload constraints.
- Discussed assignment of Chris Santaniello to replace Lisa as co-lead of the workgroup
- Unanimous vote to accept Chris Santaniello as the new co-lead of the workgroup

V. Integrated Response Team

- Comprised of multiple state agencies along with philanthropic & community partners who meet weekly looking across all social determinants of health
- Goals:
 - Activate new and existing resources to support individuals and families at the local level
 - Keep systems and providers running strong to endure both the crisis and the eventual transition out of COVID-19
- Work to create solutions to help deploy services
- Summary distributed to group. This document may be shared.

VI. DCYF Supporting Families Well Being Guide

- Jessica Lanney reviewed the information within the Family Wellbeing guide, which was created in response to child abuse and neglect reports falling dramatically since COVID-19 as well as general concerns that many families are in need of help right now but may not know how to access it.
- Asked the workgroup to assist in widely distributing this guide (<https://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcyf/documents/family-wellbeing-during-covid-19.pdf>)
 - Rich Lavers noted they could post a link on the NH Easy webpage and get training for his call center staff.
 - Dee Pouliot will share with Public Housing Authorities and FUP participants

- Chris Tappan asked if this can be distributed to Legislators
 - Representative Mary Jane Wallner asked to have a discussion on how to get this to Legislators
- Allie Joseph noted she could shared on a NH Moms Facebook G
- Donnalee noted that she has a FAQ from Workplace Success which may also be helpful to distribute
- Danielle Bishop suggested sharing to community Facebook pages if possible

VII. Update on Economic Analysis

- We are remaining committed to the development of the economic analysis as this tool may help to:
 - Identify the newly vulnerable population related to COVID-19
 - Identify new cliffs which may be exposed due to the pandemic
- Working to enhance and expand the scope of analysis to include NCI and NCCP
 - Include unemployment data instead of focusing mainly on labor market data.
 - Now have the ability to access more data to associate reasons for unemployment filing (ex. unable to work because they are a primary caretaker for school aged children can now be identified)
 - The draft and issue report due date has been moved from June 18 to September 1.
 - Interim reports being developed
 - Will share all interim reports with this working group
- Childcare is a common denominator, try to identify how the availability may affect affordability. During the recovery and stabilization phase will begin to look at the rates compared to scholarship eligibility and copays.
 - Providers will be ask to assist to create new models. The landscape of childcare is changing/shifting.
 - Senator Cindy Rosenwald asked if given the choice to improve or enhance child care scholarships program, would it be more important to expand income eligibility or reduce the copays or both?
 - This is being looked into, but no firm answers yet

- Collecting feedback from the School Transition Reopening and Redesign Task Force (START) survey for insight on how local communities will be looking at reopening schools

VIII. Benefit Calculator Manhattan Strategies

- Manhattan Strategies group has continued to work on the benefit calculator
- Will be scheduling a meeting within the next few weeks to see where we stand
 - Will need to identify how those waived or flexed will factor in
- Timeline will be effected, but the need is greater than ever

IX. Quarterly Report – Due June 1, 2020

- Report will capture what we have discussed today to include updates on the components
- Group asked if they would prefer another meeting to discuss the report or if they would like to have a copy of the report to review and give feedback
 - Unanimously agreed to review and give feedback

X. Misc. Discussion

- Asked for feedback on what you are seeing for the clients/population you are serving
 - Allie Joseph (private employer MY TURN, Inc.) noted that they have check-in's every Monday to see what participants may need to get through the week.
 - Currently she has not had any loss of housing, or no access to food.
 - She is hearing that the unemployment process has been running smoothly. People are feeling well supported especially with the additional CARES Act funds. NH has done a fantastic job and communities have really stepped up.
 - Transportation has been an issue, doing many drop offs.
 - Donnalee told group that community action programs have funds available and please do not hesitate to reach out if you know of someone in need.
 - Concerns raised about when benefits fade away. How will this impact people? We need to look ahead and plan

- Dee Pouliot noted that people seemed well supported with the unemployment process. Majority of her clients have disabilities. Also seeing an increase in landlord interest in their programs.
- Waivers to lower restrictions have allowed parents to pick up food at summer feeding sites.
- If anyone is having difficulty with unemployment, there is a hardship support team. Please reach out to Commissioner Copadis or Rich.
- Hearing that people thought they had exhausted benefits, but there are extensions available for some people, please make sure they speak to NHES.
- SNAP Program is applying for a waiver to allow online ordering through Walmart & Amazon. Will find out if this is approved in July. This would be a huge resource.
- Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) application was finalized and families should start to be receiving those soon

XI. VIII:Adjournment and Next Meeting

- Will need to identify a date which will work best for majority for next meeting

Minutes submitted by: Maureen DiTomaso